

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 0706

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SW

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSSON ON EDELSTAM SITUATION

SUMMARY: IN 15-MINUTE INFORMAL TALK WITH CHARGE, FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSSON SAYS PALME AND HE HAVE DIRECTED AMBASSADOR EDELSTAM TO SAY NOTHING ABOUT PUTATIVE U.S. ROLE IN CHILEAN COUP. THEY WILL VET EDELSTAM'S PREPARED STATEMENT ON HIS EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE. TO CHARGE'S SUGGESTION THAT SWEDEN'S INTEREST WOULD BE SERVED IF IT KEPT EDELSTAM AWAY FROM WASHINGTON MEETING, ANDERSSON REPLIED THAT POLITICAL STORM WOULD BE TOO GREAT. TO FURTHER SUGGESTION THAT EDELSTAM VOLUNTARILY FOREGO APPEARANCE, ANDERSSON INDICATED THAT HAD BEEN TRIED AND EDELSTAM REFUSED. END SUMMARY

1. I ENCOUNTERED ANDERSSON AT SOCIAL AFFAIR EVENING OF FEBRUARY 20 AND WENT ASIDE WITH HIM FOR 15-MINUTE TALK, WHEREOF ABOUT 13 MINUTES WAS DEVOTED TO EDELSTAM SITUATION. ANDERSSON BEGAN BY ASKING HOW THINGS WERE GOING. I SAID FINE EXCEPT FOR EDELSTAM VISIT, WHICH WAS A REAL PROBLEM FOR US AND I DID NOT SEE NOW HOW IT WAS GOING TO BE RESOLVED.

2. ANDERSSON THEN DISCLOSED HOW PALME AND HE ARE TRYING TO HANDLE EDELSTAM APPEARANCES IN U.S. HE SAID PALME AND HE HAD

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HAD EDELSTAM IN AND WENT OVER HIS PLANS AND INTENTIONS.

EDELSTAM TOLD THEM HE WAS PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES IN CHILE - HIS IMPRESSIONS OF ALLENDE REGIME (INCLUDING SOME MISTAKES IT MADE), HIS VIEW (VERY NEGATIVE) OF THE JUNTA, AND THE HUMAN SIDE OF CHILEAN TRAGEDY (LOSS OF LIFE, POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT, ETC.). EDELSTAM SAID IT WOULD BE ABOUT CHILE ONLY - NOT ABOUT U.S. OR ITS POLICY.

3. ANDERSSON SAID, "PALME ASKED HIM STRAIGHT, 'DO YOU HAVE ANY DIRECT EVIDENCE OF AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN OVERTHROWING THE GOVERNMENT?' AND EDELSTAM SAID, 'NO.' THEN PALME TOLD HIM HE SHOULD HAVE NOTHING TO SAY ON THAT SUBJECT. EDELSTAM SAID THERE WAS THE FACT THAT AMERICA USED ITS ECONOMIC POWER FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, BUT THIS WAS DONE IN MANY COUNTRIES, NOT ONLY IN CHILE." I INTERJECTED THE COMMENT THAT THAT SOUNDED BIT OMINOUS. ANDERSSON SAID EARNESTLY, "HE ASSURED PALME AND ME THAT HE WILL TALK ONLY ABOUT CHILE."

4. ANDERSSON ALSO SOUGHT TO REASSURE US ABOUT EDELSTAM LECTURE TOUR. HE SAID EDELSTAM'S BASIC LECTURE WILL BE EXPOSITION OF SWEDEN'S ACTIVE NEUTRALITY POLICY. I SAID WE WERE LITTLE CONCERNED BY THE LECTURE TOUR. WHAT GIVES US A REAL PROBLEM IS HIS INSISTANCE ON PLAYING A ROLE IN AN INTERNAL PARTISAN POLITICAL CONTROVERSY. I ASKED HOW THAT COULD SERVE SWEDEN'S INTEREST. DID EDELSTAM REALLY HAVE TO APPEAR? ANDERSSON CONCEDED IT WAS LEGALLY POSSIBLE TO ORDER EDELSTAM TO STAY HOME. BUT, HE SAID, THE REACTION IN SWEDEN WOULD BE TOO GREAT. HE SAID ALL POLITICAL PARTIES HAD "THE SAME VIEW" ON CHILE. FOR SWEDISH PUBLIC OPINION EDELSTAM WAS THE SYMBOL OF THAT VIEW. PEOPLE WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND IF HE WERE "SILENCED". "WE JUST CAN'T DO IT," ANDERSSON SAID.

5. I SAID THERE WAS A PROBLEM ON OUR SIDE ABOUT UNDERSTANDING, NAMELY, WHY A SENIOR OFFICIAL OF A FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT SHOULD GET INTO AMERICAN POLITICS. I SAID THERE WAS SERIOUS REASON TO FEAR HIS APPEARANCE IN WASHINGTON MEETING WOULD AFFECT U.S.-SWEDISH RELATIONS ADVERSELY. COULD EDELSTAM NOT RECOGNIZE SWEDISH NATIONAL INTEREST AND FALL DIPLOMATICALLY ILL OR SOME SUCH? ANDERSSON DID NOT REPLY DIRECTLY BUT MADE IT CLEAR APPEAL HAD BEEN MADE AND EDELSTAM REJECTED IT. ANDERSSON SAID, "I DO NOT LIKE THAT MAN. I DO NOT UNDERSTAND HIS BEHAVIOR. PARTICULARLY

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LARLY SINCE HE WENT TO CUBA. THAT AFFECTED HIM. I SAID TO HIM, "THE PEOPLE YOU ARE RUNNING WITH ARE COMMUNISTS. WHAT FOR? I AM ANTI-COMMUNIST." AS EXAMPLE OF EDELSTAM'S WANT OF JUDGMENT, ANDERSSON SAID IN WONDERMENT THAT EDELSTAM HAD ASKED HIM TO BE NAMED AMBASSADOR TO U.S. IN AN ATTITUDE OF FRUSTRATION, ANDERSSON SUMMED UP EDELSTAM AS "A ROMANTIC." HE WENT BACK TO STRESS EFFORT BEING MADE TO CONTROL WHAT EDELSTAM SAYS IN WASHINGTON. HE SAID EDELSTAM'S MANUSCRIPT WILL BE VETTED BY

PALME AND HIMSELF TODAY, AND HE WILL BE HONOR BOUND TO STICK TO IT.

6. MFA DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS (WACHTMEISTER) WAS ALSO PRESENT AT SOCIAL AFFAIR. IN SUBSEQUENT TALK WITH HIM, HE TOLD ME CONGRESSIONAL CONFERENCE HAS BEEN ORGANIZED INTO A MORNING AND AFTERNOON SESSION. HE SAID MORNING SESSION WILL BE DEVOTED TO EVENTS AND CONDITIONS IN CHILE AND AFTERNOON SESSION TO U.S. ROLE. WACHTMEISTER SAID EDELSTAM HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO SPEAK ONLY AT MORNING SESSION AND TO SIT SILENT IN AFTERNOON "BECAUSE HE HAS NO INFORMATION ON U.S. ROLE." HE HOPED WE WOULD RECOGNIZE THE DISTINCTION. I SAID I WOULD INFORM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE FOREGOING.

7. COMMENT: I UNDERSTAND EDELSTAM WILL TRAVEL TO THE CONTINENT LATE TODAY OR TOMORROW AND NOT RETURN TO SWEDEN BEFORE FLYING TO WASHINGTON. IT IS CLEAR GOS FEELS UNABLE TO ORDER HIM TO PASS UP WASHINGTON APPEARANCE AND HE WON'T VOLUNTEER. THERE IS OBVIOUSLY MASSIVE PRESSURE ON HIM - FROM PALME DOWN - TO SAY LITERALLY NOTHING ABOUT U.S. IN CHILE CONTEXT. IN VIEW OF ANDERSSON'S UNUSUAL CANDOR, SUGGEST HOLD HIS REMARKS CLOSELY. OLSEN

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